



Special consideration points

- *This is an **optional professional** level of the ACUC training ladder*
- *Candidates must already be at least Divemasters*
- *A Civil Liability insurance covering the activities which the candidate will be performing is required.*
- *There is no ISO or RSTC equivalence for this level, although academic and skill wise, it would be in between an ISO 24802-1 and the ISO 24802-2*

Foreword

The ACUC Entry Level Instructor course is an **optional** level. An ACUC Advanced Instructor can assist an ACUC Trainer in the teaching of this course but must be evaluated and certified by an ACUC Instructor Trainer or higher level. The hours of assistance by Advanced Instructors in this type of course, duly documented, can be counted towards the training hours needed for higher level certifications.

The main characteristic of this course is that besides doing the same as an ACUC Divemaster, the students that successfully complete the course, can also teach, evaluate and certify, the Scuba Diver and the ACUC Open Water Diver courses. This course can be taken as a “hands on” learning type of course or as a course with a fixed content.

This is an ACUC International standard and therefore is always subject to the different national or local legislation. In cases where legislation exists that differs from this standard, the ACUC country or area delegation if it exists, must request in writing to the ACUC main office, a “**Deviation**” from this standard to satisfy the legislation of the area, supporting their request with the appropriate documentation. Deviations, if requested, to be considered valid, must appear at the end of each specific standard document.

In cases where the local or national legislation is more restrictive than the ACUC Standard, then the local legislation will prevail, but if the ACUC Standard is more restrictive, then the ACUC Standard will prevail, because by complying with the more restrictive ACUC Standard, logically the local legislation will be also complied with.

Regarding required training hours, none are specified because these could vary depending on many factors (number of students, diving environment, etc), therefore the training hours needed are dependent on the fulfilment of learning objectives. In the ACUC manuals and documents where hours are specified, these are only to be considered recommendations.

1 Scope

This Standard specifies safety related minimum competencies to be achieved in **recreational** scuba training at the ACUC Entry Level Instructor level. This Standard applies only to **contractual training** and certification in recreational scuba diving.

2 Definitions

For the purposes of the ACUC standards, the following definitions apply. Please note that not all terms shown next might appear in any one specific standard.

2.1 ACUC: Entity providing recreational scuba diving training systems and certification.

2.2 basic equipment: Equipment consisting of the following items:

- Mask
- Fins
- Snorkel

2.3 breathing gas: Appropriate mixture of oxygen and nitrogen.

2.4 certification: Confirmation that a student has completed all requirements of a course according to the specific standard, as issued by ACUC.

2.5 cold water: Water less than 10°C / 50°F from its highest average temperature or water of 10°C / 50°F or less

2.6 competencies: What a diver can do once certified

2.7 confined spaces: condition that applies when there is no direct access to the surface, such as inside a wreck, cave, etc.

2.8 confined water: Swimming pool with a depth appropriate to the activity, or body of water that offers similar conditions (maximum depth 6 meters)

2.9 diving equipment: Equipment consisting of the following items:

- Mask,
- Fins,
- Snorkel,
- Cylinder,
- Regulator,
- Alternative breathing gas system, which could range from a simple octopus system to a duplicate breathing system with a separate breathing gas supply,
- Cylinder-support-system and buoyancy control device including (if appropriate) a quick release weight system,
- Submersible pressure gauge (breathing gas pressure monitor),
- Means to measure depth and time and to safely limit exposure to inert gas,
- Diving suit (if appropriate).

Note: Specific environments may require appropriate additional equipment (e.g. an underwater navigational aid, knife/cutting device).

2.10 dry specialty: Specialty course where no water training takes place, such as for example, First Aid, Oxygen Administration, etc

2.11 knowledge levels:

- Basic: knows how...
- Intermediate: knows how and why...
- Advanced: knows how, why and also, knows how to teach it...

2.12 non certification scuba course: Scuba course where the participants do not receive an ACUC certification at the end of the course, such as for example, scuba introduction, scuba refreshment, scuba buoyancy, etc

2.13 open water: Body of water significantly larger than a swimming pool offering conditions typical of a natural body of water encountered in the region where training takes place.

2.14 prerequisites for training: What a diver needs or conditions to be met prior to start training

2.15 reduced visibility: condition that applies when diving at night or when visibility is less than an arm's length, for whatever the reason

2.16 scuba: Self-contained under-water breathing apparatus.

2.17 scuba instructor: A qualified individual, certified by ACUC to teach, evaluate and certify divers.

2.18 theory knowledge: knowledge imparted in a dry environment (classroom, pool deck, etc)

2.19 training definitions:

- To observe: to be an observer in a course but without any type of participation
- To assist: besides the above, to assist in the training of a course under the direct supervision of a higher level instructor
- To train: besides all of the above, to train in a course without the need of a higher level instructor's supervision

- To evaluate: besides all of the above, to evaluate by one self or with other evaluators, candidates' performances
- To certify: besides all of the above, to issue candidates' certifications

2.20 training open water dive: open water training experience under direct supervision of a qualified instructor, comprising at least the following activities:

- Briefing
- Preparation to dive
- Pre-dive checks
- Entry into water
- Descent procedures
- Under-water activity
- Ascent and surfacing procedures
- Exit from water
- Debriefing
- Post dive procedures
- Recording the dive.

2.21 water skills: knowledge imparted inside a wet environment (pool water, sea water, etc)

3 Competencies of a certified, recreational ACUC Entry Level Instructor

An ACUC Entry Level Instructor shall be trained to have sufficient competencies by knowledge, skill and experience to, in addition of what a Divemaster must know, teach, evaluate and certify, the ACUC Scuba Diver and the ACUC Open Water Diver courses. ACUC Entry Level Instructors shall dive within the following parameters

- Dive and lead divers to a maximum depth of 40 meters / 130 feet
- Dive and ensure that others dive only when appropriate support is available at the surface,
- Dive and ensure that others dive under conditions that are equal or better than the conditions where they were trained.
- Assist certified divers in new environments which the Entry Level Instructor is familiar with.

If accompanied by an ACUC instructor of superior level, certified ACUC Entry Level Instructors may gain progressive experience beyond these parameters (except depth) and develop competency in managing more challenging diving conditions designed to lead to higher qualifications. Where further instruction or experience is required, this can only be provided by a suitably qualified ACUC instructor.

4 Prerequisites for training

To qualify for enrolment in a course according to this Standard the student shall meet the following prerequisites:

- **Minimum age:** To start training: 18 years. (see also point 10, Assessment and Certification requirements)
- **Health requirements:** Students shall be medically screened as suitable for recreational diving by means of an appropriate medical examination. Students shall be advised of the importance of appropriate regular medical examinations.
- **Previous Certification:** ACUC Divemaster or similar from other organizations recognized by ACUC, with at least 41 hours bottom time experience – 82 dives (see also point 10, Assessment and Certification requirements)
- **Documentation requirements:** Candidates must sign the ACUC Risk Release, the Safe Diving practices forms, The Ethical conduct form, etc... These forms are included in the Entry Level Instructor kit and also, are downloadable from the ACUC private website.

5 Instructor:Student Ratios during training

- **Theory (classroom or pool):** No limit
- **Confined Water:** 10 students per Instructor, with an additional 4 students per Divemaster, with an absolute maximum of 20 students.
- **Open Water:** 8 students per Instructor, with an additional 2 students per Divemaster, with an absolute maximum of 12 students.

6 Introductory information

The following information shall be made available to the students prior to, or during the first class meeting.

- Prerequisites according to 4,
- Limitations of eventual qualification,
- Scope of course,
- Course procedures,
- Costs, insurance and contractual issues according to national regulations,
- Equipment requirements,
- Certification requirements according to 10,
- Diving related legislation and legal requirements.

7 Course content relating to theory knowledge

Candidates must already have the knowledge of a Divemaster, plus:

7.1 Teaching Techniques: Students shall have an advanced theory knowledge of:

- Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Scuba Diver course, including these topics:
 - Selecting the basic equipment (snorkelling equipment)
 - Selecting the scuba equipment
 - Diving Physiology
 - Underwater communications
 - Decompression and different dive types
 - The marine environment
 - ACUC International
- Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Open Water Diver course, including these topics:
 - Basic Diving Equipment
 - Scuba Diving Equipment
 - Diving Physics
 - Diving Physiology: Medical Aspects
 - The Marine Environment
 - The Freshwater Environment
 - Ecology
 - First Aid
 - Underwater Rescue
 - Dive Planning, including ACUC Decompression Tables
 - Labour Opportunities
 - ACUC

8 Course content relating to scuba skills

8.1 Confined water scuba skills: Besides the already acquired skills of a Divemaster, students shall be able to perform the following skills. Each skill shall be mastered in confined water before that skill is performed in open water.

- Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Scuba Diver course, including:

- Putting the basic equipment on
- Using the basic equipment
- Wearing the scuba equipment
- Using the scuba equipment
- Emergency ascents
- Rescue and first aid
- Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Open Water Diver course, including:
 - Putting the basic equipment on
 - Practices with Basic Equipment
 - Wearing the scuba equipment
 - Practices with Scuba Equipment
 - First Aid
 - Underwater Rescue
 - Emergencies handling (ie: regulator recovery, shared breathing, mask removal, cramps, etc...)
 - Dive Planning

8.2 Open water scuba skills: Besides the already acquired skills of a Divemaster, students shall be able to perform the following skills in conditions typical of the local environment.

- Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Scuba Diver course, including:
 - Putting the basic equipment on
 - Using the basic equipment
 - Wearing the scuba equipment
 - Using the scuba equipment
 - Emergency ascents
 - Rescue and first aid
- Teaching and Evaluating the ACUC Open Water Diver course, including:
 - Putting the basic equipment on
 - Practices with Basic Equipment
 - Wearing the scuba equipment
 - Practices with Scuba Equipment
 - First Aid
 - Underwater Rescue
 - Emergencies handling (ie: regulator recovery, shared breathing, mask removal, cramps, etc...)
 - Dive Planning

9 Practical training parameters

- All underwater skills in confined water shall be introduced, directly supervised and evaluated by an ACUC instructor Trainer, who shall be in the water during each session and shall be in direct control of students throughout all sessions. The Trainer can be assisted by an ACUC Advanced Instructor.
- Prior to the first open water dive the candidate shall effectively show proof of, or demonstrate, to a scuba instructor the following watermanship skills, without the use of mask, fins, snorkel, or other swimming aids:
 - 300m / 985f distance swimming,
 - 10 minutes survival swim/float.
- Before participating in open water dives a student shall have demonstrated sufficient theoretical knowledge and scuba skills in confined water to be able to perform the open water dives in the prevailing conditions.
- The maximum depth during training dives shall not exceed 25 meters / 80 feet
- All training open water dives shall be conducted during daylight hours in water that allows direct vertical access to the surface. Open water dives therefore shall not be conducted in underwater caves or below ice.
- During open water dives the student shall at least be equipped with diving equipment according to 2.9.

- All underwater skills in open water shall be introduced, directly supervised and evaluated by an ACUC instructor Trainer, who shall be in the water and in charge of each open water dive. The Trainer can be assisted by an ACUC Advanced Instructor.
- As per clause 5, the absolute maximum number of students per scuba instructor in ideal conditions for supervision and escorting under water is eight. The maximum number of students per qualified assistant for supervision and escorting under water is two. At no time shall a student in or under water be left without supervision.
- Prior to open water dives the scuba instructor shall prepare an “emergency plan”. In the immediate vicinity of the dive site there shall be:
 - A suitable first aid kit
 - An emergency oxygen unit which delivers at least 15 l/min. for at least 20 minutes
 - Communication system suitable for alerting emergency services.
- The scuba instructor shall cancel or abort the open water dive if environmental conditions or a student’s physical or mental condition make this necessary.
- A maximum of 3 daily training dives will be allowed

10 Assessment and certification requirements

- **Knowledge:** The student shall demonstrate, by means of the written test¹ supplied by ACUC, knowledge of scuba diving theory according to 7 and knowledge of skills according to 8.
- **Scuba Skills:** The student shall satisfactorily demonstrate to an ACUC instructor trainer, the scuba skills according to 8.
- **Minimum Dives:** The student must have at least 50 hours of bottom time (100 dives) before obtaining the certification
- **Minimum Participation in Training Courses:** The student must show proof in the Divemaster Training Logbook, that he has participated as a Divemaster or Entry Level Instructor-in-training, during at least 20 hours of theory classes and 20 hours of water classes before obtaining the certification.
- **Minimum Age:** To Obtain the certification: 19 years.

11 Training Dives

No additional training dives, except those in which the student participates as a Divemaster or Entry Level Instructor-in-training, are required for this level.

12 Candidate’s certification

Candidates will be certified as ACUC Entry Level Instructors when they have complied with all the requirements. These include:

- Minimum 100 Open Water Dives (50 hours bottom time)
- Pass the ACUC Entry Level Instructor written examination

13 Candidate’s qualifications

Once completed the course, the ACUC Entry Level Instructor will be able to:

¹ If for some reason, the student cannot do a written test, then the Instructor can do an oral examination to the student based on the written test provided by ACUC and if this is the case, the Instructor will transfer the student’s oral answers to the written test. Whatever the case, the written test must be completed, either directly by the student or indirectly by the Instructor, using the student’s oral answers. Instructors can, if they wish, offer additional tests to the student, however, the ACUC provided test must be done.

- Dive up to a maximum depth of 40 meters and always accompanied by at least another certified diver.
- Be able to guide groups of divers in open water without supervision.
- Be able to teach, evaluate and certify snorkel diving and the Scuba Diver and the Open Water Diver courses without supervision
- Be able to teach any “dry” (no water involved) specialties for which the Entry Level Instructor holds or obtains the Specialty Instructor certification

14 Deviations: None requested